

From: Mike Muldoon
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/14/01 7:05pm
Subject: Public response to Microsoft settlement action

Renata Hesse,

As someone familiar with computing and the computer industry, and the adverse effects of Microsoft's monopolies in these areas, I cannot see how the settlement that is proposed even pretends to remedy the antitrust violations for which Microsoft has been found culpable. The company has already been found in violation, and this is the penalty phase of the case, but the settlement contains no penalties and actually advances Microsoft's operating system monopoly. A just penalty would at barest minimum include three additional features:

1. Any remedy seeking to prevent an extension of Microsoft's monopoly must place Microsoft products as extra-cost options in the purchase of new computers, so that the user who does not wish to purchase them is not forced to do so. This means that for the price differential between a new computer with Microsoft software and one without, a computer seller must offer the software without the computer (which would prevent computer makers from saying that the difference in price is only a few dollars). Only then could competition come to exist in a meaningful way.
2. The specifications of Microsoft's present and future document file formats must be made public, so that documents created in Microsoft applications may be read by programs from other makers, on Microsoft's or other operating systems. This is in addition to opening the Windows application program interface (API, the set of "hooks" that allow other parties to write applications for Windows operating systems), which is already part of the proposed settlement.
3. Any Microsoft networking protocols must be published in full and approved by an independent network protocol body. This would prevent Microsoft from seizing de facto control of the Internet.

If the national interest is at issue, as I believe it is and as the judge has suggested it is, it is crucial that Microsoft's operating system monopoly not be extended, and in this I quote the study released a year ago by the highly respected Center for Strategic and International Studies, which pointed out that the use of Microsoft software actually poses a national security risk.

In closing, all are surely in agreement that the resolution of this case is of great importance, not just now but for many years to come. This suggests a careful and deliberate penalty is far more important to the health of the nation than is a hasty one.

Thank You,
Mike Muldoon
Senior Architect
Digital Age Media

FREE voicemail, email, and fax...all in one place.
Sign Up Now! <http://www.onebox.com>